REMARKS

The Office Action mailed on June 10, 2004 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed. By the above Amendment, Applicant has amended Figure 1 to correct a minor informality, i.e., omission of a reference identifier. Additionally, Applicant has added dependent claims to claims 1 and 2, i.e., claims 3-5 and 6-10, respectively, and added new claims 11-20. Claims 1-20 are now pending in the application. Support for the amendments and additional claims may be found at least on page 7, lines 3-11 and lines 12-19; page 10, lines 10-20; page 11, lines 6-9 and lines 12-16 of the instant specification. Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter is presented by entry of this Amendment and that the application, as now presented, is in condition for allowance.

A. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,665,838 (the '838 patent) to Brown et al. (hereinafter "Brown"). Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection under § 102(b) is inappropriate since the '838 patent issued only last December. To the extent that the Examiner meant to reject the claims under § 102(e), in view of the earlier filing date of the '838 patent, i.e., July 30, 1999, Applicant respectfully presents the arguments below. Applicant nonetheless requests clarification be provided in the next communication regarding the section of the patent statute under which the original claims were rejected.

In any event, claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102, as being anticipated by Brown '838 patent, as indicated beginning on page 2 of the June 10, 2004 Office Action. In view of the amendments above and the remarks below, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

The present invention is generally directed to a document imaging platform system and method for capturing, transmitting, storing, retrieving, and displaying documents in a shared-system environment using the Internet or other network. The present invention utilizes thumbnail images along with full images to facilitate

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transmission of multipage documents and to avoid transmission bottlenecks. The present invention thereby improves document transfer times and alleviates storage problems by taking advantage of the smaller file size required to store thumbnail images. Additionally, the present invention employs a hierarchically-based document security scheme with user and administrator controls to secure the documents.

For example, claim 1 currently recites a document image management system and a user display device for displaying a stored document, with the central database forwarding the document to the user display device pursuant to a given user query. Claim 1 further recites that the document contains a plurality of images, with the first of the images being a full image and the remainder of the images being thumbnail images, whereby when a user of the user display device selects a given thumbnail image from the remaining plurality of images, the central database forwards the full image corresponding to the given thumbnail image. Method claim 2 includes steps employing similar elements therein. Claims 3-20 include the above features and additional elements.

In contrast, the '838 patent provides a method for presenting content or a web page in a distributed database (see col. 2, lines 23-24). In the '838 patent, a user selects a web page for viewing (step 605), and a Domain or Proxy server (hereinafter referred to simply as a "server") parses the user-selected web page for links to other web pages (step 610) indicated as associated, i.e., the results from a search engine query. The server then generates thumbnails of the pages from the search-associated web pages, which do not have an existing thumbnail, in a cache (step 625) (emphasis added). Next, the server sends the thumbnails along with the rest of the original web page where the web page has a plurality of links to linked pages in the database (see col. 2, lines 25-28).

Applicant respectfully submits that this is not equivalent to each document comprising a plurality of images (and a corresponding plurality of image identification numbers) with a first image being a full image and the remainder of the plurality of images being thumbnail images, as set forth in the claims presented. Also, the '838 patent provides that a navigation assistant parses the web page to determine if it contains links (universal resource locators "URLs") to other web pages (step 1135). If

it does not, then the navigation assistant waits until a new web page is loaded at which point the process is repeated (step 1195). If the web page does contain links to other web pages (step 1135), then the server prefetches these other links (step 1150). If the web page does not contain links to other web pages (step 1135), then the original web page (with modifications, if any) is sent to the user (step 1193) and then the server waits until the user requests a new web page (step 1195) (see col. 8, lines 47-59).

The '838 patent describes a number of embodiments, however, each of the embodiments operates on web pages and links one web page to others contained therein. What is transformed to the client is the requested web page, as a full image with the web links set forth therein, and thumbnail images of those web pages for those web links in the original web page. Multiple pages are neither transmitted nor contemplated in this reference. Indeed, there is no disclosure of a document or any suggestion comprising multiple pages of images being sent to the client in the format recited in the present invention, as claimed herein.

Additionally, the '838 patent fails to disclose a document maker creating document records and thumbnail representations of each image within a document; nor is there any mention made of a central database storing the plurality of created documents, each document comprising a plurality of images and a corresponding plurality of image identification numbers for indexing the plurality of documents. Further, the '838 patent fails to disclose a system journal logging and tracking functions performed by the document image management system on the documents stored in the central database, as claimed herein.

The Examiner briefly cites column 2, lines 24-31, i.e., the Summary, as disclosing all of the features and limitations of claims 1 and 2 of the present invention. But, upon examination, this section of the '838 patent as well as the rest of the reference, merely disclose a way of presenting content from a web page. It does not, however, disclose the document image management system recited in claim 1 and claim 2 of the present application, as well as claims 3-20. To wit, the document image management system recited in the claims display a stored document based upon a user query, and when a user selects a given thumbnail image from the plurality of images

that comprise the document, the central database forwards the full image corresponding to that thumbnail image.

In contrast, the web page presentation system of the '838 patent is akin to an Internet search engine that displays the results in graphical form. A user submits a query, and linked pages in the database are returned as the result of the search (see Figures 8, 10, 13, and 14 and the corresponding sections of the '838 patent). While Altavista™ and other Internet search engines receive a query and return lists of names of linked web pages, the system of the '838 patent merely presents these results in graphical form. The '838 patent does not, however, present the collection of images and image identification numbers that are included in a given document as required by the claimed invention. Further, the '838 patent fails to disclose a document maker that creates document records and thumbnail representations of each image within a document; nor is there any mention made of a central database storing the plurality of created documents, each document comprising a plurality of images and a corresponding plurality of image identification numbers for indexing the plurality of documents. Further, the '838 patent fails to disclose a system journal for logging and tracking functions performed by the document image management system on the documents stored in the central database.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that since the '838 patent neither discloses nor suggests the present invention, as claimed, the claims, i.e., claims 1-20, as currently recited, are allowable over the cited reference. Applicant thus requests that the rejection of claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 be withdrawn.

Similarly, Applicant respectfully submits that remaining pending claims 3-20 are also allowable for at least the reasons above and are readily distinguishable from the art cited, including the '838 patent.

Further, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-20, in addition to being novel over the art cited, are non-obvious over that art, including the '838 patent.

B. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner's reconsideration of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims, i.e., claims 1-20. An early and favorable Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited. In the event that the Examiner is of the opinion that a brief telephone or personal interview will facilitate allowance of one or more of the above claims, the Examiner is courteously requested to contact Applicant's undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached formal drawing sheet includes a change to Fig. 1. This sheet, which includes Fig. 1, replaces the original sheet including Fig. 1. In Figure 1, previously omitted element 100 has been added.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet
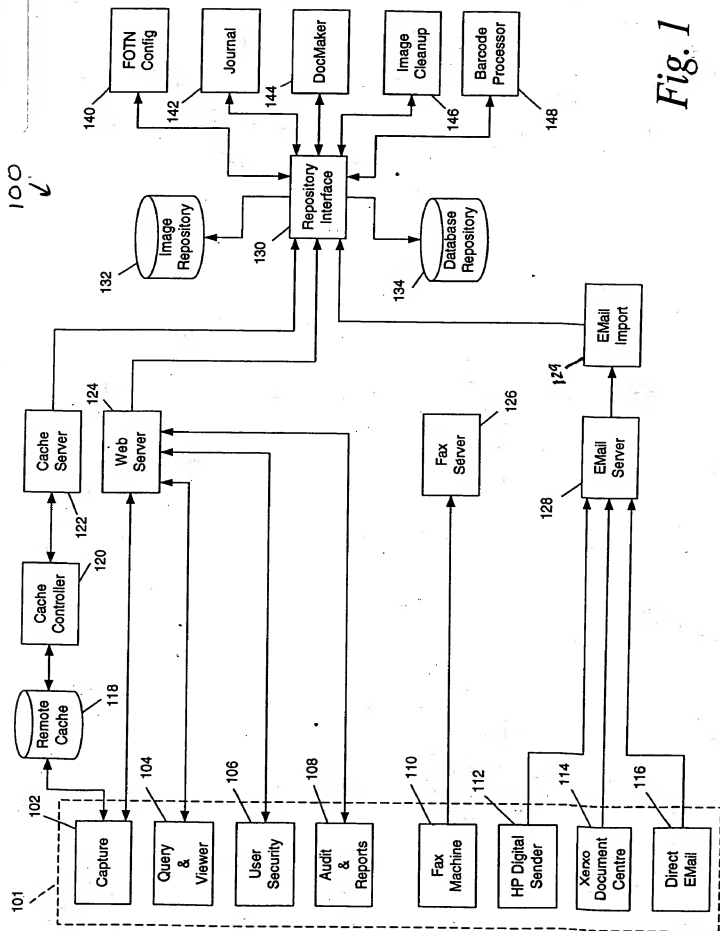
Annotated Sheet Showing Change

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Fig. 1